



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Health and Recovery Services Administration
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January 9, 2009

TO: First Steps Providers

FROM: Todd Slettvet, Section Manager *TS*
Family Services Section
Division of Healthcare Services

**SUBJECT: BUDGET UPDATE FOR FIRST STEPS MATERNITY SUPPORT
SERVICES/INFANT CASE MANAGEMENT PROVIDERS**

On December 26, 2009, we sent a message conveying the information we had at that time about a five percent budget reduction impacting the Maternity Support Services (MSS) Infant Case Management (ICM) Program and clients (see First Steps website). That five percent reduction only addressed the last six months of the biennium (January 1, 2009 through June 30, 2009). The Governor's budget directs a twenty percent reduction in MSS/ICM services starting July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2011. Rather than cut the program by five percent starting January 1, 2009, our plan is to begin the twenty percent reduction effective April 1, 2009. This will allow time for program redesign and accommodate both the initial five percent reduction and the long-term twenty percent reduction.

To implement this budget reduction, decisions will be guided by:

- The legislative purpose of First Steps funding, which is to improve birth outcomes and respond to clients' individual risks and needs;
- Limitations due to ProviderOne;
- Washington State specific data-evidence based and best practices, recommendations from the MSS clinical team based upon research and literature review, and provider input from 2007 regional meetings;
- An ambitious time-constrained work plan;
- Input from workgroups.

Next Steps:

- The work plan will be shared with First Steps providers by January 16, 2009;
- Develop a communication plan with opportunities for input into decisions;
- Responses to frequently asked questions will be posted to the First Steps website regularly.

If you have questions between today and January 16, 2009 please send them to the Department of Health First Steps e-mail address at firststepsmessages@doh.wa.gov. The First Steps state team will have less time to respond to individual inquiries this week.

We appreciate all of your hard work and ideas and will do our best to create opportunities for your input.